

and others which are disapproved in each sex. In marrying, people are influenced by these appreciations and they select for or against them. Thus marriage is controlled by a complicated selection according to a number of standards which prevail at the time and place. At present the popular view seems to be that all standards are false, and that the limitations ought to be trampled on as representing abandoned ideals. It is thought that the whole matter ought to be left to the control of an unintelligent impulse, which is capable of any caprice, but whose authority is imperative. Perverse as the old restrictions often were, they had in them a notion of self-selection such as is needed now, if only the criteria and standards which are correct can be ascertained.

The old restrictions contained a notion of breeding up, a notion which is by no means false, if we can get a rational idea of what is "up." No marriage ought now to be contracted without full application of all we know about heredity and selection. If, in any society, marriages were thus contracted, the effect would be most favorable on posterity, and on the power in action and the perpetuity of the group, for the net result would be that those who are least fit to propagate the race would be the ones who would be left unmarried or would marry each other. In the latter case their posterity -- would soon disappear, and the evil factors would be eliminated. A father now refuses his daughter to a drunkard, a criminal, a pauper, a bankrupt, an inefficient man, one who has no income, etc. Some men refuse their daughters to irreligious men, or to men who are not of their own sect or subsect. Some allow inherited wealth, or talent, or high character, etc., to outweigh disadvantages. In

short, we
already have selection. It always has existed. The
law of incest
was an instinctive effort in the same direction. The
problem is
the same now as it always has been, — to refine and
correct the
standards and to determine their relative
importance.

532. Restrictions by biological facts as yet too
uncertain. As
yet, undoubtedly, the great reason why people are
reluctant to
construct a policy of marriage and population on
biological doc-
trines is that those doctrines are too uncertain.
The reluctance
is well justified. Hasty action, based on shifting
views of fact